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Message Text

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ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NEA-07 NSC-05 PM-03 DODE-00
INR-05 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 SP-02 HA-02 EUR-08 L-01
MCE-00 /054 W
----------028041 060631Z /12
P 060546Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8035
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MANILA 11266

LIMDIS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PINS, SHUM, RP
SUBJECT: MARCOS EXPLAINS INTERNAL SECURITY CONCERNS

1. SUMMARY. MARCOS' PRINCIPAL PURPOSE DURING OUR JUNE 29 MEETING WAS TO PRESENT ME WITH HIS SURVEY OF THREATS TO PHILIPPINE SECURITY. HIS SURVEY, WHILE COVERING LITTLE THAT IS NOT FAMILIAR GROUND, WAS NOTABLE FOR: (A) WAY HE DESCRIBED THE THREAT HE SEES FROM THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST MOVEMENT (DSM), AND (B) HIS COMMENTS ABOUT VARIOUS ARAB COUNTRIES, OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVES, WITH A ROLE IN THE MNLF PROBLEM. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT MARCOS JUNE 29, HE TOLD ME ABOUT VARIOUS INTERNAL SECURITY CONCERNS.
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HE BEGAN WITH THE NEWLY-PUBLICIZED DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST MOVEMENT. HE PROMISED TO PROVIDE US,ALONG WITH CARDINAL SIN AND ATENEO UNIVERSITY LEADERS, WITH A SLIGHTLY SANITIZED COPY OF A GOP INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT OUTLINING EVIDENCE OF OPPOSITION DETERMINATION TO MANUFACTURE EVIDENCE AGAINST GOP HANDLING OF THE APRIL 7 ELECTIONS. MARCOS SAID THE DOCUMENT PROVES THAT "ATENEO PRIESTS"

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WERE INVOLVED IN POLITICAL SKULDUGGERY, SOME DELIBERATELY AND SOME UNWITTINGLY.

3. HE SAID THE GOP IS VERY CONCERNED THAT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH MAY BE GETTING DRAWN INTO ACTIVE POLITICAL OPPOSITION. THE DSM, HE SAID, IS "VERY CLEVER AND PRAGMATIC" BECAUSE IT ESPOUSES BOTH RADICAL CHANGE AND RELIGION, AND THUS IT APPEALS MORE TO THE AVERAGE FILIPINO THAN DOES COMMUNISM. "WE AND THE COMMUNISTS ARE BOTH CONCERNED," HE SAID, THAT THE DSM MAY DEVELOP INTO A SERIOUS AND POPULAR MOVEMENT. THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT THE DSM IS ORGANIZING A UNITED FRONT OF NON-COMMUNIST OPPOSITIONISTS. IN CONTRAST TO MAOIST TACTIC IT URGES EQUAL EFFORTS BE MADE IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS. THE MOVEMENT IS ALSO VERY TROUBLESOME BECAUSE IT IS BASICALLY NONVIOLENT (ADVOCATING VIOLENCE "ONLY IF NECESSARY"), AND THUS DIFFICULT TO PROSECUTE. THE MILITARY BELIEVES, HOWEVER, THAT THE DSM WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE JUNE ARSON AND GRENADE INCIDENT IN THE DAVAO CITY MARKET WHERE SEVERAL PEOPLE WERE KILLED.

4. THE DSM IN THE PHILIPPINES, MARCOS EXPLAINED, IS PATTERNED AFTER THE "LIBERATION THEOLOGY" OF RADICAL PRIESTS IN LATIN AMERICA LED BY A FATHER GUTIERREZ(PHON.) ALTHOUGH HE CLARIFIED THAT GUTIERREZ IS NOT INVOLVED HERE. THE LOCAL DSM LEADERS, HE SAID, ARE THREE JESUIT CONFIDENTIAL

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PRIESTS: FATHER ROMEO INTENGAN, WHO WAS ARRESTED APRIL 9 IN THE LABAN PROTEST MARCH AND RELEASED JUNE 5; ANOTHER WHO IS MARCOS' OWN RELIGIOUS ADVISER AND ACCOMPANIED HIM ON HIS EASTER RETREAT THIS YEAR (WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO LEARN HIS NAME); AND A THIRD HE DID NOT IDENTIFY.
ACTION REQUESTED: WE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING FROM DEPARTMENT ANY PERTINENT INFORMATION ON FATHER GUTIERREZ.

5. MARCOS ASSERTED, HOWEVER, THAT THE MUSLIM REBELLION IN THE SOUTH IS THE MOST SERIOUS INTERNAL SECURITY PROBLEM HE CURRENTLY FACES. IN THE EARLY MONTHS OF MARTIAL LAW (1972-73) THE MNLF WAS ABLE TO TAKE AND HOLD EXTENSIVE TERRITORY, WHILE GOVERNMENT FORCES CONTROLLED ONLY URBAN AREAS OF THE SOUTH. BY LATE 1973, HOWEVER, THE GOP HAD SUCCEEDED IN INFILTRATING THE MNLF. THE PHILIPPINE ARMED FORCES ARE NOW STRONGER AND ABLE TO HANDLE THE SITUATION RELATIVELY SATISFACTORILY. THE GOP DOES NOT GIVE MUCH PUBLICITY TO THE MUSLIM REBELLION, MARCOS SAID, PARTLY BECAUSE HE WANTS TO AVOID ALARMING THE POPULACE AND PARTLY BECAUSE THE MILITARY DOES NOT WANT TO ADMIT SHORTCOMINGS IN ITS OWN CAPABILITY TO DEAL WITH THE REBELLION.

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6. HE IS CONCERNED, HOWEVER, ABOUT A POSSIBLE LINKUP BETWEEN THE MNLF AND THE COMMUNIST NEW PEOPLE'S ARMY. CAPTURED COMMUNIST PARTY LEADER JOSE MARIA SISON, HE SAID, ADMITTED TO HIM THAT THE NPA PLANS TO JOIN FORCES WITH THE MNLF. MOREOEVER, WHILE MNLF LEADER NUR MISUARI MAY NOT BE A COMMUNIST HIMSELF, HIS WIFE AND SISTER-IN-LAW ARE "KNOWN PARTY MEMBERS" AND HAVE HAD CONTACT WITH COMMUNIST EMBASSIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST, PARTICULARLY IN TRIPOLI.

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7. REGARDING FOREIGN SUPPORT FOR THE MNLF, MARCOS TOLD ME CERTAIN ARAB STATES AND MALAYSIA WERE ALL INVOLVED. BOTH SABAH AND WEST MALAYSIA HAD MNLF BASE AND TRAINING AREAS. HOWEVER, "TO BE FAIR TO THE MALAYSIANS," HE ADDED, THEIR SUPPORT WAS PROBABLY IN REACTION TO "MACAPAGAL'S SABAH CLAIM." ALTHOUGH SUCH SUPPORT CONTRADICTED MALAYSIA'S AUGUST 1977 ASSURANCES TO HIM THAT IT WOULD STOP ALL FORMS OF ASSISTANCE, THE GOP IS MORE CONCERNED ABOUT ARAB SUPPORT. LIBYA IS PARTICULARLY WORRISOME IN VIEW OF ITS CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOVIET UNION, AND A MNLF-LIBYA-USSR CONNECTION CANNOT BE DIS-

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COUNTED. ACTUAL LIBYAN SUPPORT HAS DECREASED SIGNIFICANTLY SINCE MRS. MARCOS MET WITH KADHAFI AND MARCOS TALKED WITH HIM BY PHONE IN LATE 1976. BUT "NOBODY CAN DEAL WITH KADHAFI," HE SAID: KADHAFI IS EVEN NOW DENYING CRITICA
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PARTS OF MARCOS' EXCHANGES WITH HIM, DESPITE MARCOS' OFFER TO SUPPLY TAPES OF THE CONVERSATIONS. MARCOS ALSO MENTIONED THAT THE MNLF IS RECEIVING AID FROM OTHER ARAB STATES BESIDES LIBYA, INCLUDING A MILLION DOLLARS A YEAR FROM SAUDI ARABIA.

8. MARCOS STATED ARAB AMBASSADORS IN MANILA WERE DOMINATED BY EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR SHINNAWI WHO IS PERSUADED THERE WAS NO COMMUNIST INFLUENCE OVER THE MNLF. TO COUNTER WHAT HE TERMED INACCURATE REPORTING FROM THOSE ARAB EMBASSIES WHICH SHOULD BE SYMPATHETIC TO THE GOP, PRINCIPALLY THE SAUDI ARABIAN,HE IS CONSIDERING INVITING SAG FONMIN PRINCE SAUD TO VISIT MANILA.

9. THE MNLF'S MAIN PROBLEM, MARCOS SAID, IS GETTING ARMS. HE CITED THE RECENTLY REPORTED THEFTS FROM THE U.S. NAVY ARSENAL AT SUBIC AND SAID THE MNLF HAS ALSO STOLEN ARMS FROM SOME PHILIPPINE ARMED FORCES CAMPS. THEY USE A VERY SOPHISTICATED TECHNIQUE INVOLVING FALSIFICATION OF INVENTORY LEDGERS, SO THAT LOSSES CAN BE DISCOVERED ONLY WHEN A PHYSICAL COUNT IS MADE.

10. MARCOS THEN MOVED TO THE U.S. ROLE IN SUPPLYING THE PHILIPPINE ARMED FORCES. HE SAID THE GOP WILL OBVIOUSLY TRY TO KEEP THE PEACE INTERNALLY ITSELF AND IS NOT SEEKING DIRECT U.S. INTERFERENCE IN DEFENSE OF PHILIPPINES BY INVOKING MDA. BUT IT IS SEEKING COMPENSATION FOR OUR MILITARY FACILITIES IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO BUY WEAPONS TO COUNTER THE FOREIGN SUPPORT GIVEN THE SOUTHERN REBELS WHICH INCLUDES AK-47S AND EUROPEAN MANUFACTURED MORTARS. THE U.S., HE SAID, MUST HELP THE GOP MODERNIZE ITS ARMA-MENTS. U.S. WEAPONS DELIVERIES UNDERSTANDABLY FELL BEHIND SCHEDULE DURING THE VIETNAM WAR PERIOD, HE SAID,
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BUT IT IS INCREASINGLY ESSENTIAL NOW FOR US TO REGULARIZE THE FLOW OF ARMS TO THE AFP. MOREOVER, WE MUST AGREE TO REMOVE FROM THE MILITARY AGREEMENTS A PROHIBITION AGAINST THE GOP BUYING ARMS FROM OTHER SOURCES. (I COMMENTED I WAS NOT AWARE THAT SUCH A PROHIBITION CONTINUED IN

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FORCE. HE REPLIED IT HAD NEVER BEEN FORMALLY RESCINDED.)
WHILE THE U.S. MAY SEE LITTLE URGENCY IN THESE MATTERS,
HE CONCLUDED, THE GOP CANNOT AFFORD THE LUXURY OF WAITING
TO ACT IN THE FACE OF POSSIBLE OUTSIDE THREATS IN MINDANAO.

11. COMMENT: MARCOS OFTEN RAMBLING, STREAM-OF-
CONSCIOUSNESS DISCUSSION OF THE INTERNAL SECURITY SITUATION
PROVIDES LITTLE NEW INFORMATION BUT IS AN ILLUMINATING
INSIGHT INTO HIS THINKING. MOST STRIKING IS THE FACT
THAT HE SPENT ALMOST NO TIME DISCUSSING THE COMMUNIST
PARTY AND THE NPA, WHEREAS ENRILE'S RECENT BRIEFING OF
THE IBP FOCUSSED PRIMARILY ON THEM. PERHAPS THE OMISSION
WAS PURE OVERSIGHT. HIS COMMENTS ON THE NEWLY-PUBLICIZED
DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST THREAT ADD LITTLE TO THE LITTLE WE
ALREADY KNOW ABOUT IT BUT POINTED UP HIS CONCERN THAT THE
CHURCH, OR SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS THEREIN, MIGHT BE TAKEN
IN BY IT. HIS EXPLANATION OF THE MUSLIM SITUATION
PROVIDES NOTHING NEW, EXCEPT FOR HIS CRITICAL COMMENT
ABOUT MY ARAB COLLEAGUES HERE. MURPHY

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